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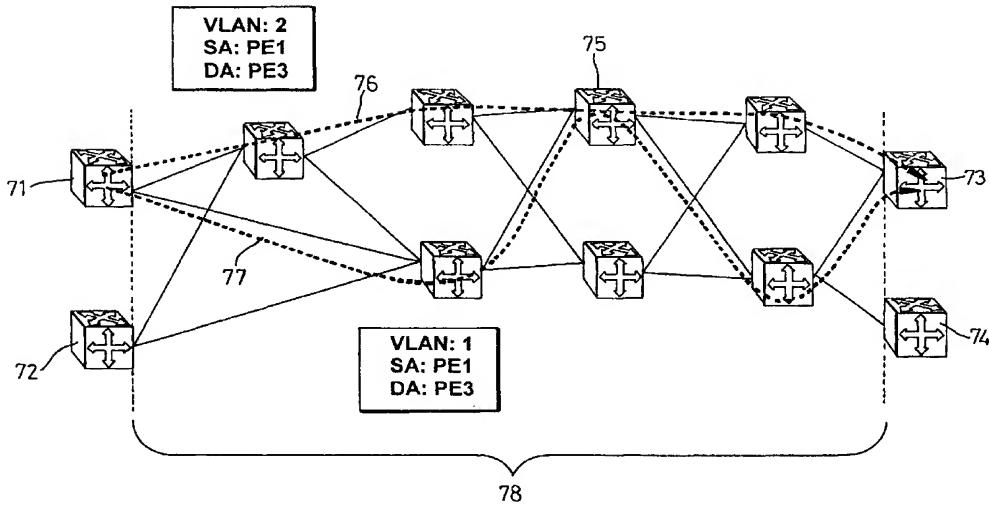
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(54) Title: DIFFERENTIAL FORWARDING IN ADDRESS-BASED CARRIER NETWORKS



(57) **Abstract:** The invention relates to enabling differential forwarding in address-based carrier networks such as Ethernet networks. There is described a method of and connection controller for establishing connections (76, 77) in a frame-based communications network comprising nodes (71-75 and 78) such as Ethernet switches. The connections are established by configuring, in various of the nodes, mappings for forwarding data frames, such as Ethernet frames. The mappings are from a combination of a) a destination (or source) address corresponding to a destination (or source) node (73) of the connection and b) an identifier, such as a VLAN tag. The mappings are to selected output ports of the various nodes. By using the combination of destination (or source) address AND identifier, the mappings enable data frames belonging to different connections (76, 77) to be forwarded differentially (ie forwarded on different output ports) at a node (75) despite the different connections having the same destination node. This enables flexibility in routing connections and the ability to perform traffic engineering.



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